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# A D D R E S S

DELIVERED IN THE

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH,

NEW-YORK,

AT THE

FUNERAL OF ROBERT LENOX, ESQ.

ON THE

16th OF DECEMBER, 1839,

BY

REV. WM. W. PHILLIPS,

PASTOR OF THE CHURCH.

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NEW-YORK:

1840.

*W. W. P.*



The following Address was hastily prepared for the occasion on which it was delivered, and it has been printed without correction by the Author, at the request and for the use of the family of the deceased.



## A D D R E S S .

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IN the account of the creation of man, we are told that "the Lord God formed him of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and man became a living soul. Human persons, therefore, have a material body formed of the dust, and a spiritual nature, which is an emanation from the author of their being. The body in its present state is only the temporary habitation of the spirit during its sojourn upon the earth.

While these two natures are united, the creature is intelligent, moral, and accountable. He is under law to God, and fitted by infinite wisdom to accomplish, as an

agent, the purposes of his creation. He is active, social, religious ; capable of enjoying and of suffering—of giving and of taking impressions, and thus of exerting influence.

In his primitive state he was holy and upright. Having been created in the image of God and after His likeness, he was His sanctuary, in which He dwelt, and through which he made known His moral perfections. Having a mind to perceive, and a heart to acknowledge, the glory which was displayed in all his works, he was the priest of Jehovah, through whom He received the homage of the whole creation, and the tribute of praise which was due unto His name.

But sin entered and destroyed him as such. The candlestick was removed, the law deposited there was displaced, the altar was broken down, all his faculties have been perverted, and all his moral powers



have been weakened, and he has become subject to death as the wages of sin. He is now in ruins—yet though in ruins, he is still a wonderful being ; not merely as it respects the structure of his body, which is fearfully and wonderfully made, not merely as to the intimate and mysterious union of the soul with the body, but especially with respect to his powers of thought—of investigation—of invention, and of reasoning—with respect to the passions, desires and affections, by which he is agitated and enlisted in various pursuits—with respect to his energy—perseverance, and the amount of good or of evil which he is permitted to accomplish in the world. He can rise to heaven—contemplate the divine attributes—analyze the works of creation, and traverse the universe of God. He can cause his influence to be felt in every part of the globe, and that not by one

or two, but by many generations. He is instrumental in accumulating all the wealth, in acquiring all the honour, and inventing all the pleasures of this world, and of effecting the changes and revolutions which are constantly occurring. At the same time he is but a worm, and may be crushed before the moth. In a moment all his energies cease to act ; his springs of action and the fountains of his emotions on earth are dried up ; his breath is taken away and he dies. Some of the human family are taken away in youth, others in the vigour of manhood, and a few in old age ; a few are permitted to remain in the body until its machinery is worn out. Their earthly tabernacle is left to decay gradually, until it falls and is dissolved. They experience the truth of that description given by the wise man under the influence of inspiration, of the process of dissolution—" The

keepers of the house tremble, the strong men bow themselves, and the grinders cease because they are few, and those that look out of the windows are darkened; the almond-tree blossoms, the grasshopper becomes a burden, and desire fails; the silver cord is loosed, the golden bowl, the pitcher at the fountain, and the wheel at the cistern are broken: then the dust returns to the earth as it was, and the spirit to God who gave it; yea, man goeth to his long home, and the mourners go about the streets."

This separation of the soul from the body is before us all. It was after the transgression and after the promise of a Saviour had been given, that this sentence which has passed upon all our race, was pronounced—"dust thou art and unto dust shalt thou return." However thoughtless and careless men may be respecting it, and however familiar we may become

with the event, through the frequency of its occurrence, this constant departure of immortal spirits into the eternal world, occasioning the passing away of one generation after another, is a most interesting, deeply affecting and solemn subject for our consideration. To say nothing of the painful circumstances under which it ordinarily occurs—of the sickness, diseases and suffering—the weariness and weakness which precede it—the parting with friends whom we expect to meet no more perhaps forever—and the giving up of all possessions and enjoyments which are peculiar to our state in this world—the violent breaking up of the unparalleled union between the body and the soul, followed by a cessation of all the functions of the body, which has been the instrument of the operations of the faculties and powers of the soul, and of all the actings of the being—of the person

constituted by their union—the uncertainty, or rather the certainty of what is after death—is that which invests it with its importance and solemnity. We know that the body must descend into the silent tomb or into the cold grave. “He that goeth down to the grave, shall come up no more, he shall return no more to his house, neither shall his place know him any more : He must say to corruption thou art my father, and to the worm thou art my mother and sister.” And in the grave there is no distinction ; the bodies of all are vilified, made ghastly and loathsome, and are reduced to sordid dust. We know also that after death there is a judgment ; the soul does not cease to exist, but goes to God to be judged according to the deeds done in the body, and to have its place and portion assigned for eternity. There will be no moral change, no transformation of character from carnal

to spiritual, from sinful to holy after death —“he that is filthy shall be filthy still, he that is righteous, shall be righteous still.” It is, therefore, the crisis of our existence, being its consummation in time, and its commencement in eternity. It is the goal of our space for repentance, the termination of our day of grace ; after it no mistakes can be rectified, no errors can be corrected, no unguarded speeches can be recalled, no causes of regret can be removed, no farther preparation for the final trial can be made. The character has been formed, the accounts have been closed and sealed up, and the sentence must be pronounced instantly. The soul of the believer, when absent from the body, is present with the Lord ; the soul of the unbeliever, upon the dissolution of the body, goes to its own place, and an impassable gulf is fixed between them forever.

He who can trifle with such an event, regarding the death of a man no more than of a brute, gives more evidence of folly than of wisdom, and will find himself surprised, alarmed, and overwhelmed, when it overtakes him. Some there are, who affect to feel perfectly indifferent respecting death, and to make light of it, when in health. They have witnessed the dissolution of others, under different circumstances; they know that millions have died before them, and they have become hardened and unconcerned—but they have not died themselves. When death shall lay his cold hands upon them, they will find his work is solemn and trying; and the fact that he has already slain his thousands, and tens of thousands, does not diminish his terrors, nor make it easier to die. When their companions were overtaken by this last enemy, in the exercise of their reason, they had a

sense of guilt awakened in the conscience, their fortitude forsook them, and their vain boasting was forgotten, or remembered only with shame. The fear of the curse, the apprehension of the wrath to come, have bowed the proudest spirits, and filled them with unutterable horror. When the body could retain the soul no longer, and the soul dared not make its escape, they felt that it was a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God, who is eternal, and can punish eternally.

Be assured, that our forgetting death or making light of it, as yet future and perhaps far distant, cannot prevent its occurrence, or prepare us for it. Sooner or later it will come to all without respect of persons, whether they be high or low, rich or poor, young or old. I have said, we know what is after death; because God has revealed it to us in his word, which is the only



source of our knowledge on this subject. None has returned to tell us what is after death ; and when the soul is leaving this world, we ask in vain, without the Bible to teach us, whither is it going ? where will it be in a few moments ? will it sleep ? will it be annihilated ? will it wander through infinite space, or inhabit some other body ? Will it pass into a state in which it will be capable of neither pleasure nor pain—of neither joy nor sorrow ? Such questions have never been answered, and cannot be, except by Him who is the resurrection and the life, and who has brought life and immortality to light by the gospel. Receiving His testimony by faith, we know that there is no intermediate place between the present and the future world, and that there are but two places, in one of which the souls of all men can be after death. And after so many have lived and died in the faith of

Jesus Christ, having been enabled to speak with certainty of life and immortality, and of the way in which it may be obtained, and to say, "We know in whom we have believed, and feel persuaded that He is able to keep that which we have committed to him against that day," it is too late to question the truth of Christianity, or to doubt the reality of the Christian's hope.

Yet even if the gospel were a "cunningly devised fable," if faith in its doctrines were a delusion, it must be acknowledged that it possesses a peculiar efficacy, producing the greatest and most happy changes in the characters of men, making them willing to exercise self-denial for the general good, to avoid sin, to practice whatsoever things are true, are pure, lovely, and of good report—supporting them under trials, reconciling them to all their losses, privations and disappointments in this life,

and to their last change, filling them with hope and joy even in the hour of death.

There is no other influence than that of the gospel—there are no other considerations than those which are revealed in the Bible that ever have or ever can produce these effects. Was it ever known, that one who was young and comparatively happy here, having everything around him to make life desirable—wealth, honour, children and friends, with the prospect of remaining with them, who was in the exercise of his reason, but who had no hope of immortality beyond the grave, and who knew nothing of going to be with Christ, which is far better than to remain here under the most favourable circumstances—was it ever known that such an one was willing to die?

Nay, my friends, so strong is the attachment to life, so well satisfied are men

with it, except in cases of insanity, that when bending under the infirmities of many years, and when racked with pain, they cling to it, and are unwilling to depart. But faith in the gospel of Jesus Christ, and the lively hope which it inspires, enables those who possess it, to say under all circumstances, "Thy will be done."

It is not a delusion, it cannot be a delusion ; we have found it a blessed and glorious reality, falling in with all the aspirations and vast desires of the soul—adapted to our state, and meeting all our necessities : it is the remedy, the antidote for all our ills. Infidelity professes to have discovered absurdities in revelation, and claims for itself the support of reason and philosophy ; but it is itself the greatest absurdity, being utterly inconsistent with right reason and sound philosophy, contrary to all evidence, and destructive of human happiness. And if there be no doubts respecting the truth of the gospel,

what manner of persons ought we to be ? If what we learn in the Bible, of our creation, of the introduction of sin, and of our consequent state and character—of what has been done to save sinners, and of what we are to expect after death, be true, as we know it is true, then is it our first duty to acquaint ourselves with God, and be at peace with him. Then, surely, we ought not to live to ourselves. but unto Him who loved us, and gave himself for us ; then we ought not to live for time but for eternity ; then we ought not to spend our time and energies in the pursuit of the things of this life, and of our personal gratification—neglecting the precious interests of our souls, delaying repentance, and the consideration of the things which belong to our peace, until a dying hour ; but to seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and lay up for ourselves treasures in heaven,

where moth and rust do not corrupt, nor thieves break through and steal. " I speak as unto wise men ; judge ye what I say."

Called so frequently to perform the last offices of respect and affection for our departed friends, being so constantly reminded of our own mortality, we must not forget it ; we must not be deaf to these calls, nor harden our hearts under them ; we must not live as if we were to remain here always. Yet we seem to labour under a strange infatuation in this respect ; for whilst we are told that the work of death is going on every day and every hour, making a draft upon our population of between one and two hundred every week, and that from all classes of our fellow-citizens. We do not realize that we too must soon be swept away.

Scarcely had some of you returned from the funeral of Ward and of Wyckoff, when

you were invited to attend here on another similar occasion. Nay, it is not long since he whose remains are now before us, was among you, worshipped within these walls, and joined in the funeral services of those of his friends who were taken before him, and which of us will next require these services to be performed for him?

He who has now been taken from us, was one whom God has highly favoured. If it be asked, how was he favoured? I answer: on account of his natural endowments—the place he was permitted to occupy in society—the influence he acquired and exerted—on account of his usefulness, and the measure of enjoyment which fell to his lot.

His person was manly and commanding; his constitution was robust and vigorous; and his health almost uninterrupted, until the last year of his life. With these physical advantages he possessed

strong intellectual powers ; a clear and grasping mind ; sound judgment ; a large share of common sense, and a great degree of practical wisdom. In connexion with these, he possessed high and honourable feelings, an acute sense of justice, uncommon powers of discrimination between right and wrong in the most involved and abstruse cases ; at the same time he was governed by principles of the strictest integrity ; so that he was shrewd, prudent, and cautious, without cunning, or meanness or artifice. He felt an instinctive abhorrence of all false pretences, and of all attempts at overreaching. He was one whose counsel and advice I valued more, and whose opinion respecting all practical subjects which were within his knowledge, I regarded more highly, than of any man whom I have ever known. His candour and frankness in expressing his opinions, and his unwavering



firmness in adhering to them when conscientiously formed, sometimes made him enemies, where he might have made friends by a different course. He was free from affectation, and from that false delicacy and specious politeness which borders on deceit and hypocrisy, and is willing to please at the expense of truth and integrity. Acting from conviction, from a sense of duty, and according to principles tested by experience, he acted with promptness and decision. He was not fond of novelties, nor easily moved from his steadfastness by them, whatever they might promise, but was satisfied with the old ways, and loved to walk in the old paths. He was distinguished for his industrious habits, for his close attention to his business according to method, and in strict adherence to system ; whatever he did was done in order, without hurry or confusion. With such endowments, and with such

habits, through the blessing of Providence, he accumulated his wealth, and acquired his influence in the community ; as he deserved, so he possessed in a high degree, the confidence of his fellow-men, and was called at different times to fill places of trust and of great responsibility.

Those who have been associated with him in some of the leading moneyed institutions in this city, and in the city council, of which he was at one time a member, can testify with what ability and fidelity he performed his duties. As an evidence of the confidence reposed in his judgment and integrity, and of the respect in which he was held as a merchant, by those of the same profession, he was, for several successive years, chosen as the president of the Chamber of Commerce, in which office he continued until his death. As president of the Chamber of Commerce, he was, ex-offi-

cio, one of the trustees of the Sailors' Snug Harbour, a charitable institution, to which he has rendered invaluable service. He had also been for a considerable time, and was until his death, a most efficient and useful member of the board of trustees of Princeton College. In all these situations, he acted as for himself—devoting his time and giving his counsel to them—managing and husbanding their pecuniary resources as faithfully, and with as rigid economy, as he did in his own personal affairs.

Having been associated with him in the last two boards mentioned, I can testify to the deep interest which he felt in their welfare—to his great usefulness in promoting their prosperity—and that the loss of no one member of either of them could be more severely felt, than of him. If ever there were a strictly honest, and scrupulously conscientious public agent, and one

who might be trusted as such, it was ROBERT LENOX.

But his loss will be most sensibly felt by his family, and by this church, of which he has long been a member, and for thirty years, a ruling elder. He has been a warm and true friend to the 1st Presbyterian Church, and one of her most able and liberal supporters. He was sincere and constant in his professions, and in his friendships. When the speaker came among this people as their pastor, he was one of the fathers who took him by the hand as a son, and the last of those who were then members of the session, saying, as he did it, with strong emotion, "I give you my hand, which shall be yours as long as I have a hand to give!" and he has redeemed his pledge. He has been a faithful friend, a wise counsellor, a kind father.

But I will not indulge my personal feel -

ings on this occasion. As a worshipper, and as an officer of the church, he was punctual in his attendance on the administrations of the word and ordinances, and in fulfilling all his engagements. Unless prevented in Providence, he was ever in his place, and ever at his post, willing at all times to meet his responsibilities. He loved the church, not in word, but in deed and in truth, and was ever ready to adopt such measures as were judged necessary to promote her welfare.

When he felt satisfied of the importance and practicability of any benevolent enterprise, and had confidence in the wisdom and integrity of those who were conducting it—and when those whom he considered worthy objects of charity, were brought to his knowledge, he gave liberally and cheerfully for their support—but he did not sound a trumpet before him, nor allow

it to be done by others in praise of his deeds.

He was, in principle and by profession, a Presbyterian, but without bigotry or censoriousness. He felt and expressed a decided preference of the doctrines and forms of worship of that branch of the Church of Christ to which he belonged, but he had too much good sense, and too much of the spirit of the gospel, to believe that his was the only, and exclusively, the true Church of Jesus Christ. In all his intercourse with those of other Christian denominations, he was kind and courteous, according to them the same liberty which he felt it a privilege to exercise himself. During the recent unhappy controversy, which agitated the Presbyterian church, he was among the first to oppose and to bear his testimony against the errors and innovations which occasioned it. He was uniformly and decidedly in fa-

vour of maintaining the standards of the church, according to their plain and obvious meaning, and in the sense in which they had always been received by true and consistent Presbyterians.

He was a strict observer of the Sabbath, and a faithful instructor of his household. His example in this respect, as a father, and as the head of a family, is worthy of our imitation, more especially because it has been so remarkably attended with the promised blessing. Whilst he was kind, affectionate, and indulgent as a husband, and a Christian parent, he was, at the same time, firm and exemplary. He worshipped God, with all his house, and trained up his children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. He went with them and before them to the sanctuary, not only,—but to the family altar, saying to them, “Come with me, and walk with me in the ways

of God !” and his labour was not in vain ; his pains-taking has been graciously rewarded ; his prayers have been answered. He was permitted to see all his children brought to the knowledge of the truth, and to cherish the hope, that they were made heirs of eternal life. He enjoyed the pure and elevated satisfaction of hearing those who survive, witness a good confession—taking upon themselves their baptismal vows—avouching the God of their father to be their God—of sitting down with them at the same communion-table—and of partaking with them of the symbols of the broken body and shed blood of their common Lord.

Few men have been permitted to pass through life as he has done—attended with so much prosperity—forming such an extensive acquaintance with the most eminent men of his day in the church, and in



the state—exerting so much influence in the different stations which he occupied—possessing, in so high a degree, the confidence of his fellow-citizens—enjoying so much domestic happiness—being surrounded with all which renders life desirable, and having experience of the fulfilment of the promise, “I will be a God unto thee and to thy seed after thee :” and leaving behind him a fair fame, an unsullied reputation, unimpeached integrity, an unblemished character, and a noble testimony to the efficacy of Divine grace, through which “he was begotten again unto a lively hope.” Does not his experience furnish a commendation of his principles, of his industry, and of his religion?

Within the last year his strong constitution received a shock, from which it never recovered. He saw in it, however, a kind admonition of his Heavenly Father. The

affliction was mingled with so much mercy that he was enabled to feel thankful for it. We have reason to believe that the effect of it, through the sanctifying influence of the Spirit, was most salutary on his own character, whilst it prepared his family and friends for the separation which has now taken place.

It gave him an opportunity of testing his religious sentiments—of reviewing his life, and of examining again, most faithfully, the foundation of his hope. That he might not be useless—that his faculties might not become impaired through inactivity, and that time might not be slept away, he continued, while he was able, to attend to his ordinary avocations and duties, observing the same order and strict method which had characterized his former life, and which, by habit, had become his second nature. Whilst he was thus em-

ployed, however, conversing with his friends, and preserving his accustomed cheerfulness, he did not forget that his days were numbering, that he could not expect to remain here long, and that it became him to set his house in order, and to be ready to obey the summons whenever it might please the Master to send for him. I speak now of his actual preparation, as distinguished from that which was habitual, and which he had made, long ere this. He said, repeatedly, during his last illness, "that he had not left the great and important duty of making his peace with God until then." No man felt more grateful than he, that he had not—knowing, as he did, that it could not be performed at will. Without limiting the mercy of God, we say, it ought not to be left until our last sickness ; nor will any wise man so leave it.

From his last confinement to his bed,

his decline was gradual, but without suffering, except that which necessarily attends exhaustion. He felt himself to be sinking, and that he was going the way of all flesh. He spoke of his departure with composure, and remarked, "that whilst it was painful to leave his family, he could say, in sincerity, 'Thy will be done!'" and "that his mind was perfectly at rest." This decline was of his physical, not of his intellectual powers.

His mind continued perfectly clear until the last, so that he could respond to the texts of scripture which were repeated to him, and could express the comfort he derived from the promises of God, even when the power of speech had failed. His hope of acceptance and of eternal life, was not founded on a well-spent life ; nor on the exercises of his mind ; nor upon his faith and prayers in his last moments ; but upon the efficacious

atonement and perfect righteousness—upon the merits and intercession of the Lord Jesus Christ. He had trusted in him during his life, and through all its changes he had been preserved, restrained, sanctified, and comforted by His grace when in health, and He did not fail him in the hour of death.

He dwelt with satisfaction on those precious words of the Saviour, "Let not your heart be troubled ; ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many mansions : if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you ; and if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you unto myself, that where I am, there ye may be also." When the words of the martyr Stephen, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit," and the sentence, "Come, Lord Jesus, come quickly," were repeated to

him, being then unable to articulate, he clasped his hands and raised his eyes to heaven, thus expressing his assent and approbation. Shortly after, he fell asleep, and continued to breathe naturally until the pulsations of life ceased, and the spirit departed.

He was mercifully preserved from imbecility of mind, from second childhood, from lingering sickness, from bodily sufferings, and from the convulsive struggles with the last enemy. His conflict is over. The victory, we trust, has been won by him, and he now sleeps in Jesus. "Mark the perfect man, and behold the upright, for the end of that man is peace."

I have said these things, not to praise the dead—he needs it not!—had he been consulted, while living, he would have preferred a silent burial; but I desire to have them recorded to the honour of our Re-

deemer, and for the edification and encouragement of the people of God. Gratitude requires that we should recognize His hand in the work of His grace, whilst the calmness and composure of mind—the patience and resignation to the divine will, of our departed friend, under such circumstances, should encourage us. We have the same promises; the same grace which sustained him, is efficacious to sustain all who possess it. The same Lord who is the author of it, is rich unto all who call upon Him. What He has done for other believers, He will do for all who put their trust in Him.

Having taken our last leave of him, under the conviction that he will not return to us; that we shall see him no more among us, but that we must go to him—having committed his remains to the dust, in the hope of the resurrection, let us endeavour to follow his example in so far as

he followed Christ, that when the hour of our departure shall come, we too may die in peace.

Let us live the life of the righteous, that we may die his death, and that our last end may be like his.











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